REMARKS

By this Amendment, claims 1 and 9 are amended to merely clarify the recited subject matter. No new matter is added. Claims 1-9 are pending.

The Office Action rejected claims 1 and 9 as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103 in view of Yamada et al. (JP 11003682; hereafter "Yamada") in view of Yasuhara et al. (JP 11162329; hereafter "Yasuhara"). The Office Action rejected claims 1-4 and 9 as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103 in view of Yamada in view of Yasuhara and Cannon (U.S. 4,878,854). Claims 6 and 7 were rejected as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103 in view of Yamada, Yasuhara, Cannon and Noma et al. (U.S. 4,281,238; hereafter "Noma"). Applicants traverse all rejections because the combined teachings of the references fail to teach or suggest all the features recited in the rejected claims.

For example, the cited prior art fails to teach or suggest a circular fluorescent lamp or a lighting fixture including such a circular fluorescent lamp that includes "an insulator, arranged between at least one pair of the conductive wires, limiting the movement of the conductive wires, and adhered on the sealing portion at least one of the stems. . ." as recited in independent claim 1 and 9 and dependent claims 2-8.

Although the Office Action recognized that Yamada does not teach the insulator being arranged between at least one pair of the conductive wires, limiting the movement of the conductive wires, and adhered on the sealing portion at least one of the stems, the Office Action referred to the combined teachings of Yasuhara and Cannon as teachings this feature. Specifically, the Office Action asserted that Yasuhara teaches an insulating adhesive 8 that relieves the stress arising due to base rotation and preventing contact or short-circuit of the wires by rotation of the base. However, the Office Action recognized that the insulating adhesive 8 is not adhered to the sealing portion of one of the stems thus providing insulation between the conducting wires. However, the Office Action referred to Cannon as allegedly teaching Cannon as disclosing an insulator (insulating block 26) adhered on the sealing portion though which base pins for two conductive wires 18 are inserted. The Office Action speculated that the design would enable the conductive wires to be insulated and held in position spaced apart, thereby eliminating the danger of electric shock. Further, the Office Action speculated that one of ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious to modify the teachings of Yamada and Yasuhara to modify the insulator to be adhered to the sealing portion of the lamp arranged between the conducting wires so that those conductive wires would be insulated.

However, Yasuhara merely discloses that a silicon adhesive (8) is adhered between inner wall of base (7) and outer surface of a bulb end portion (1) in such a way as to rotate to a certain amount of angle (rotation less than 30°) around the center axis the tube. However, there is no teaching that the silicon adhesive should be used in such a way to provide insulation between the conductive wires. This is because, since Yasuhara's base does not rotate, there is no need to insulate the wires from each other to protect again short-circuiting resulting from base rotation. Because, there is no appreciable base rotation in Yasuhara there is no corresponding risk requiring wires to be insulated from each other.

Moreover, Cannon fails to teach an insulator adhered on a sealing portion of at least one of the stems. In fact, Cannon only provides a general disclosure of a cap base for a line tubular bulb having a disk insulator that insulates between the pins. There is no teaching or suggestion that the insulator block, which is referred to as an insulating disk, 26 is adhered to a sealing potion of the stems. Rather, Cannon teaches that a pair of base pins 28 are staked to the insulating disk 26 to form the bi-pin base (see column 2, lines 25-26), and that the lead-wires 18 are threaded into those base pins 28 (see column 2, lines 27-28). Thus, there is no mention in Cannon of connecting the insulating disk 26 to anything corresponding to the claimed sealing portion of at least one of the stems ("a stem sealing each end of the light-transmitting circular tube air-tightly").

On page 6 of the Office Action, it is asserted that "it is well within the teachings of the art to hold and insulate the lead connectors by covering the wries with silicone rubber insulator as evidenced by U.S. Patent 4,949,007 to Takagi". Thus, the Office Action has speculated that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the insulator arranged between the wires and adhered to the sealing portion of one stem of the lamp of Yamada and Yasuhara for insulating the conducting wires.

Applicants submit that this reference to Takagi is improper and that, if the Office Action refers to Takagi as teaching some claimed feature, the rejection of claims 1 and 9 must be based on all of Yamada, Yasuhara and Takagi. Accordingly, Applicants traverse this particular rejection based on the combined teachings of all three references because none of the references teach or suggest the claimed insulator arranged between the conductive wires of at least one pair to provide insulation therebetween, and adhere on the sealing portion of at least one of the stems. As explained above and explained in the previous Amendment's remarks, the combined teachings of Yamada and Yasuhara fail to teach or suggest an insulator that is adhered to a sealing portion of at least one of the stems. The general

teachings of Takagi, directed to silicon rubber insulators, do not remedy this deficiency; thus, the rejection of claims 1 and 9 is traversed.

Thus, the combined teachings of Yasuhara and Cannon fail to remedy the deficiencies of Yamada. Furthermore, Noma, directed particularly to advantages of silicone rubber also fails to remedy the deficiencies of Yamada. Therefore, claims 1-9 are patentable over the combined teachings of the cited prior art. Accordingly, the rejections of claims 1-9 are overcome, and those claims are allowable.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Please charge any fees associated with the submission of this paper to Deposit Account Number 033975. The Commissioner for Patents is also authorized to credit any over payments to the above-referenced Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,
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